



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

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News Release

SPECIAL TASK FORCE TO TARGET COUNTERFEIT GOODS DURING 2005 ALL-STAR WEEK

ICE Continues Intellectual Property Rights Enforcement Efforts at Major Sporting Events

DETROIT– The Department of Homeland Security’s Detroit office of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced yesterday that it was joining forces with Major League Baseball, the Detroit Tigers and other Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to crack down on the illegal production, distribution and sale of counterfeit Major League Baseball merchandise and tickets during the 2005 Major League Baseball All-Star Week running July 8-12.

During a press conference at Comerica Park, potential counterfeiters were put on notice that counterfeiting is a crime and will be enforced to the full extent of the law.

"ICE’s broad authorities and expertise in combating trade fraud, financial crimes, and smuggling makes ICE uniquely positioned to combat the global threat posed by counterfeiters," said Brian M. Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in Detroit. "Our enforcement efforts target a criminal industry that costs the U.S. economy nearly a quarter trillion dollars annually."

"This anti-counterfeiting Task Force has been assembled to accomplish one single mission; to protect the thousands of Major League Baseball fans who will participate in 2005 All-Star Week in Detroit," said Ethan Orlinsky, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, Major League Baseball Properties. "Counterfeiting is a serious offense that is constantly monitored by the participating local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, and we will work together to ensure fans that every licensed product purchased during 2005 All-Star Week is of the high quality associated with the Major League Baseball brand."

The Anti-Counterfeiting Task Force warned that undercover teams of investigators would be on the lookout for counterfeit merchandise at All-Star Week events at Comerica Park and the COBO Center as well as at manufacturing facilities, retail stores and sidewalk vendors in and around Detroit.

Counterfeit merchandise will be subject to seizure, and anyone found guilty of producing, selling or trafficking counterfeit merchandise will be subject to civil and criminal penalties that could include fines of up to \$2 million and imprisonment for up to 10 years under federal, state and local laws.

Undercover ICE teams seized more than 21,000 items worth and estimated \$5 million at Super Bowl XXXIX in Jacksonville, Florida in January and more than 7,000 items at auto-racing events this year.

These efforts protect consumers from purchasing unlicensed merchandise, which often is made from low-quality materials and crafted in a sub-standard manner. Such efforts also protect the officially licensed manufacturers and legitimate vendors who invest money and other resources to provide consumers with high-quality licensed products.

Organizations and agencies participating in the press conference included representatives from ICE, Major League Baseball, the Detroit Tigers, the Detroit Police Department, the FBI, the US Attorney's Office, the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, the Michigan State Attorney General, the Michigan State Police; the Oakland County Sheriff's Department, the Macomb County Sheriff's Department and Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.